



PATENT

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In the **PATENT APPLICATION** of:

Allen M. Ely

Application No.: 10/023,582

Confirmation No.: 2688

Filed: December 18, 2001

For: PAPER JAM DETECTOR FOR
AUTOMATIC FOOD PROCESSING
LINE

Group: 3651

Examiner: Patrick Hewey Mackey

Our File: PPI2-PT005.1

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GROUP 3600

DECLARATION OF RICHARD WOODFORD UNDER 37 CFR 1.132

1. I am the Corporate Engineering Manager of Iowa Turkey Growers Cooperative, dba West Liberty Foods, Sigourney Foods, and Mt. Pleasant Foods, and have over 25 years of experience in automated food preparation and handling systems.
2. I am familiar with the Packaging Progressions, Inc. ("PPI") Jam Detection System which is the subject of the above-referenced patent application. It is my understanding that Packaging Progressions is the assignee of this application from the inventor Allen Ely, and that my statement is being submitted in support of this patent application.
3. Prior to the PPI Jam Detection System, an interleaver would feed substrate paper between two conveyors at a point where meat was being placed on the substrate. When meat would get into the substrate paper feed path at the substrate feed point, it would cause the substrate paper to accumulate in between the feed rollers. As products would continue to pass through the interleaver, additional pieces of paper would be forced into the feed rollers, and become impacted in the machine.

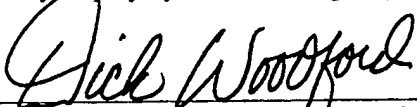
4. As these are fully automatic machines, and there is not always an operator in the vicinity, a considerable amount of product and production was lost due to not having paper substrates under the product being interleaved. In addition, the paper jammed in the feed rollers would become so impacted that it could take 10 to 15 minutes or more to clear the paper jam and restart production. This resulted in lost product as well as lost production time.

5. We installed the PPI Paper Jam Detection System in accordance with this invention, and the lost production and downtime has now been almost completely eliminated. As soon as a mis-feed of the substrate is detected by the jam detector located along or just after the substrate feed path, the paper feed system stops, which eliminates the paper being impacted into the feed rollers. The single piece of paper that did not feed through the system can easily be removed, and production restarted in a matter of seconds.

6. When the Jam Detection System is activated, it sounds an alarm and a flashing light to alert plant personnel that there is a problem, and it needs immediate attention, thus reducing downtime, lost product which cannot be used without paper substrate, and lost production due to the considerable amount of time it takes to clear a paper jam.

7. I was not aware of any prior system for jam detection of substrates from an interleaver prior to the PPI Jam Detection System being installed at my facility.

8. All statements made herein are of my own knowledge and belief. I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.


Dick Woodford, Corporate Engineering Manager
Iowa Turkey Growers Cooperative

2-11-04
Date